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ABSTRACT

This book takes a stand against the belief that "bigger is better" and warns that size and technological complexity are not risk-free. There is a price to be paid for our uncritical affirmation of bigness, universal solutions to problems, dehumanizing uniformity, and standardized mass production. The U.S. government, cities, corporations, schools, universities, churches, the military, and the social welfare system are all too big, too powerful, too intrusive, too insular, and too unresponsive to the needs of individual citizens and small local communities. Specific strategies are proposed for decentralizing and downsizing virtually every major institution in America, including the peaceful dissolution of the United States itself through secession. Chapter 4 sees small towns and rural communities as our last hope for renewing community life and proposes a policy shift from urban renewal to the promotion of sustainable rural communities. Chapter 5 focuses on the failures of U.S. public education; lays the blame on excessive centralization, overregulation, and absence of community; discusses the futility of looking for a quick fix in technology; and suggests solutions in competition and school choice and in the creation of small, locally controlled schools that foster self-initiated learning. Chapter 6 deplores the rising enrollments, rising costs, and declining educational quality at giant universities and calls for a complete restructuring of university organization, pedagogy, and curriculum. Contains references and an index. (SV)

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